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# State of Utah

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

BRIAN STEED  
Executive Director

### Utah Geological Survey

R. William Keach II  
State Geologist/Division Director

September 16, 2019

Congressman Rob Bishop, Ranking Member  
House Natural Resources Committee  
1329 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

### **Re: Letter of Support for the Identification of Geohazards and the Reauthorization of the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP)**

Congressman Rob Bishop: The Utah Geological Survey (UGS), a division of the Utah Department of Natural Resources, strongly supports the identification of geohazards (earthquake; landslide; flood; soil and rock hazards, including sinkholes; and volcanic), along with the reauthorization of the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP). The UGS, as the state geological survey for Utah, provides timely scientific information about Utah's geologic environment, resources, and hazards, so Utahns and others are aware of geologic information and use it to improve their lives.

Utah's population is projected to increase from approximately 3 million in 2015, to 5.8 million in 2065. This represents an increase of 2.8 million people with an annual average rate of change of 1.3%. Utah's growth in each decade is projected to range from 9.7% (2050-2060) to 16.7% growth (2010-2020), while the national range is projected to be 4.4% (2050-2060) to 7.5% (2010-2020). As consistently one of the fastest growing states in the country, along with being a geologically complex state, the state of Utah experiences numerous geologic hazard events and/or issues each year, mainly from landslides, rockfall, and problem soil and rock hazards. In addition, over 85% of Utah's population lives within an area where there is greater than a 57% probability of a magnitude 6 or greater earthquake in the next 50 years (greater than a one in two chance).

The UGS has been a NGGDPP-funded partner of the U.S. Geological Survey since the start of the program in 2007. These federal funds, matched with state funds, have supported the inventory, digitization, archiving, and preservation of critical geologic materials (maps, reports, documents, photographs, etc.) that directly support our geologic and geologic hazard mapping, emergency response, geologic hazard investigation, and other activities to reduce the life safety, injury, and economic risk from geologic hazards. In addition, the program has supported similar activities with geologic materials related to mineral extractive industries that are a significant portion of Utah's economic output and employment.

Continuing the highly successful NGGDPP program with adequate appropriations, along with identifying geohazards through mapping and scientific investigations, is critical to Utah and the nation as development moves into more hazardous areas, from the effects of climate change, and as urban areas likely become denser. If you have questions or require further detail, feel free to contact me at (801) 537-3301 or [billkeach@utah.gov](mailto:billkeach@utah.gov).

Sincerely,

*R. W. Keach II*

R. William Keach, II, M.S., P.G.  
Director and State Geologist



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### **Additional Geologic Hazard Information**

UGS Geologic Hazards in Utah webpages: <https://geology.utah.gov/hazards/>

Utah Earthquake Fault Database Web Map Application: <https://geology.utah.gov/apps/qfaults>

Utah Geologic Map Web Map Application: <https://geology.utah.gov/apps/intgeomap/>

2019 Round Peak Fire Rockfall, Springville, Utah Flyover Video:

<https://geodata.geology.utah.gov/pages/view.php?ref=60745>

2017 Spring Creek Road Landslide, Riverdale, Utah Information

<https://geology.utah.gov/hazards/landslides/spring-creek-road-landslide/>

2015 Allen Subdivision Sinkhole, Moab, Utah Emergency Response Information:

<https://geodata.geology.utah.gov/pages/view.php?ref=26943>

2014 Parkway Drive Landslide, North Salt Lake, Utah Information:

[https://geology.utah.gov/hazards/landslides/parkway\\_drive\\_landslide/](https://geology.utah.gov/hazards/landslides/parkway_drive_landslide/)